

AMUNDSEN'S OWN STORY OF HIS SOUTH POLE DASH

The Explorer and Four Companions With Fifty-two Dogs Climb Over Ice Mountains to the Pole. New Range of Mountains Located.

BY ROALD AMUNDSEN.

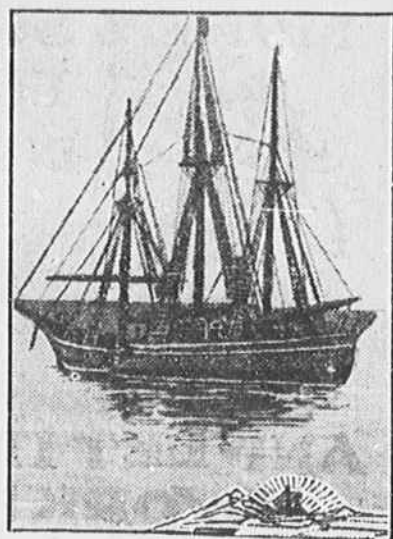
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HOBART, Tasmania, March 8, 11:20 a. m.—On the 10th of February, 1911, we commenced to work our way toward the south, from that day to the 11th of April establishing three depots, which in all contained a quantity of provisions of about 3,000 kilos. One thousand six hundred kilos, including 1,100 kilos of seal meat, were cached in 80 degrees, 700 kilos in 81 degrees and 800 kilos in 82 degrees south latitude.

As no landmarks were to be seen, these depots were marked with flags seven kilometers on each side in the easterly and westerly directions.

The ground and the state of the barrier were of the best and specially well adapted to driving with dogs. On Feb. 15 we had thus traveled about a hundred kilometers. The weight of the sledges was 300 kilos, and the number of dogs was six for each sledge. The



"GOOD OLD FRAM!"

est south latitude attained was 78 degrees 41 minutes.

Before the arrival of winter we had 6,650 kilos of seal meat in the depots, enough for ourselves and 110 dogs. Eight dog houses, a combination of tents and snow huts were built.

Winter on the Ice Barrier.

Having cared for the dogs, the turn came to use our solid little hut. It was almost entirely covered with snow by the middle of April. First we had to get light and air. The Lux lamp, which had a power of 200 standard

The Pole Surrounded by a Vast Plateau Named in King Haakon's Honor. Three Days Spent at Point Farthest South. "Devil's Dancing Room."

scientific work as possible was done, and some astonishing meteorological observations were taken.

Open Water All Winter.

There was very little snow, and there was open water close by throughout the winter. For the same reason higher temperature had been expected, but it remained very low.

In five months there were observed temperatures between minus 50 and 60 degrees Celsius (58 and 76 degrees below zero F.), the lowest temperature, on the 13th of August, being minus 59 degrees Celsius. It was then calm. On Aug. 1 the temperature was minus 58 degrees Celsius, and there were six meters of wind. The mean temperature for the year was minus 28 degrees Celsius (14.8 below zero F.). I had expected hurricane after hurricane, but I observed only two moderate storms and many excellent aurora australis in all directions.

The sanitary conditions were of the best all the winter, and when the sun returned on Aug. 24 we met the men sound in mind and body, ready to set about the task that had to be solved.

Already, the day before, we had brought our sledges to the starting place for our march toward the south. Only in the beginning of September did the temperature rise to such an extent that there was any question of setting out.

First Start For the Pole.

On Sept. 8 eight men, with seven sledges, ninety dogs and provisions for four months, started. The ground was perfect. The temperature was not bad. The next day it appeared that we had started too early, as the temperature of the following days fell and was kept steady between minus 50 and 60 Celsius (58 degrees and 76 degrees below zero F.). Personally, we did not suffer at all from this cold. Our good furs protected us. But with our dogs it was a different matter. It would easily be seen that they shrank from day to day, and we understood pretty soon that they could not stand the long run to our depot at 80 degrees south.

We agreed on returning and to wait for the arrival of spring. The provisions were cached, and off we went for the hut. With the exception of the loss of a few dogs and a couple of frozen heels everything was all right.

Only in the middle of October spring came in earnest. Seals and birds appeared. The temperature was steady between 20 and 30 Celsius (68 degrees and 86 degrees F.).

The original plan that all of us should go toward the south had been changed. Five men had to do this work, while the other three were to start for the east and visit King Edward VII. land.

This last mentioned trip was not included in our program, but owing to the fact that the English had not reached it at least this summer, as was their intention, we agreed that the best thing to do was also to make this trip.

On Oct. 20 the southern party started—five men, four sledges, fifty-two dogs and provisions for four months—everything in excellent order.

The Journey to the Pole.

We had made up our minds to take the first part of the trip as easily as possible in order to give ourselves and the dogs a rational training, and on the 23d we made our depot in 80 degrees south. We went right ahead.

In spite of the dense fog an error of two to three kilometers happened once in awhile, and we were caught by the flag marks and found these on our way without difficulty.

Having rested and fed the dogs on all the seal meat they were able to eat, we started again on the 26th, with the temperature steadily between minus 20 and 30 Celsius (4 degrees and 22 degrees below zero F.).

From the start it was the intention not to drive more than thirty kilometers a day, but it appeared that this was too little for our strong, willing animals. At 80 degrees south we began to build snow cairns of a man's height, in order to have marks on our return trip. On the 31st we reached the depot at 81 degrees and stopped there one day and fed the dogs on as much pemmican as they wanted.

We reached the depot at 82 degrees on the 5th of November, where the dogs for the last time got all they wanted to eat. On the 8th, southward again, with a daily march of 50 kilometers.

In order to lighten our heavy sledges we established depots at each degree of south latitude.

Like a Pleasure Trip.

The trip from 82 degrees to 85 degrees became a pleasure trip—excellent ground, fine sledging and an even temperature. Everything went like a dance.

On the 9th we sighted South Victoria land and the continuation of the mountain range which Sir Ernest Shackleton mentioned in his chart as running toward the southeast from the Beardmore glacier, and on the same day we reached 83 degrees and established here depot No. 4. On the 11th

Captain Roald Amundsen, First Man to Reach the South Pole.



Photo by American Press Association.

Roald Amundsen, discoverer of the south pole, is a bachelor, forty years old, and a native of Norway. His first taste of exploration was in 1897, when he sailed as first officer of Gerlach's Belgian south polar expedition. He is the first man to accomplish the long attempted feat of taking a ship from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean by way of the Northwest passage. This he accomplished in 1903 and 1905.

surface of the barrier was smooth and fine, with no sastrugi. The crevices were very local and were found dangerous in only two places. For the rest—long, smooth undulations.

The weather was excellent—calm or a light breeze. The lowest temperature on these depot trips was minus 45 Celsius or centigrade (49 degrees below zero F.). On the 4th of March, on our return from the first trip beginning on the 15th of February, we found out that the Fram had already left us. With pride and delight we heard that her smart captain had succeeded in sailing her farthest south and there hoisting the colors of his country. A glorious moment for him and his comrades—the farthest north and the farthest south—good old Fram! The high-

candies, gave us a brilliant light and kept the temperature up to 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees F.) throughout the winter, and our excellent ventilation system gave us all the air we wanted.

In direct communication with the hut and dugout on the barrier were workshops, packing rooms, cellars for provisions, coal, wood and oil, a plain bath, a steam bath and observatories. Thus we had everything within doors if the weather should be too cold and stormy.

The sun left us on the 22d of April and did not return until four months later. The winter was spent in changing our whole outfit, which on the depot trips was found to be too clumsy and sold for the smooth surface of the barrier. Besides this, as much

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